

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Teach for America

**Application ID:** 13ES145455

**Program Name:** Teach for America-Memphis

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- (+) The proposed project will serve 27,000 students from K-12 with academic support services. The applicant presents persuasive evidence of low academic achievement in the target schools compared to neighboring counties with significantly higher rates of academic performance in standardized tests. The evidence provided demonstrates the need for academic interventions and services in the community.
- (+) There is substantial documentation of the severity of the educational instructional deficiencies and their impact on the community, resulting in justification for the request for services. The students perform poorly on standardized tests compared to students in neighboring counties and have scores that are lower than national averages.
- (+) 94% of schools in this district have a Title I status and 85% of students received free and reduced lunch. This provides very clear indicators that this is an economically disadvantaged community.
- (+) The applicant clearly defines the type of activities, roles, and responsibilities planned for the AmeriCorps member intervention activities. For example, 300 full-time AmeriCorps members will provide education interventions in literacy and math to nearly 27,000 students over a two-year period. The AmeriCorps members will use lesson plans that closely correspond to state approved lesson plans and will use the Teaching as Leadership model, a proven model for effective teaching.
- (+) The applicant provided a detailed description of its program alignment and the number of requested full-time AmeriCorps slot types. The project would provide 300 full-time AmeriCorps teachers to provide a comprehensive array of teaching, learning, and motivational services for 27,000 K-12 Memphis students.
- (+) The diverse teacher pool the AmeriCorps members will bring is an excellent example of what would not be accomplished without the recruitment of AmeriCorps members.
- (+) The applicant provided strong evidence for discernible project success, significant changes in academic performance levels, and measurable community impact as project outcomes. The program would result in

considerable improvements in community socioeconomic conditions, enhanced student-learning skills, and enhanced professional development competencies for AmeriCorps members.

(+) The applicant is clear in identifying the demonstrable impact the program will have, which is a gain of an academic year or more by 70% of students to demonstrate a notable growth.

(+) The applicant clearly describes the outcome measurement tool to be used. The applicant states that it will use the Student Achievement Measurement System (SAMS), an audited and validated performance assessment tool. The SAMS will be able to provide evidence-based outcome measurements that demonstrate the overall change the applicant expects to see and the impact the program will have.

(-) The applicant does not provide statistical gains or structures atypical of regular classroom structure to demonstrate how the organization will accomplish what it would not otherwise accomplish through existing staff and/or volunteers.